

Date July 2012
Revised Aug 28 2012

WEGH Bible Studies

Revelation six and seven

Revelation 6: The Lamb opens the 7-sealed Scroll

These actions seem to initiate what is known as the “70th week of Daniel,” (Dan. 9:27) or the “Tribulation period”; the term “the great tribulation” seems to refer to the last 3 ½ years of the 70th week.

Dan 9.27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

The mention of the Lamb opens and ends this chapter; it is ‘the wrath of the Lamb’ displayed. As we do not normally ascribe

“wrath” to gentle young lambs, the term serves to bring forward the seriousness of the events taking place in this chapter. Also prominent are the four living ones (LOs). They are described in Rev. 4:6-8. As such, they represent Christ in His presentation as

the arbiter of events which take place on the earth during the unrolling of the scroll.

To understand this chapter we need to understand Matthew 24; it gives the timing and answers the disciples’ three questions of Mt.

24:3. See also: Mark 13; Lu. 21:5-36.

Matt 24.3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

1,2- The First Seal. The first LO. The Lion. The Powerful Sovereign: The White Horse.

The first living one speaks, and it sounds like thunder: a portent of the coming storms; judgement and the power of its execution.

The first LO speaks of the lion

A white horse with a rider with a bow, without arrows: he goes forth conquering etc. This LO, the lion, reminds of Matthew’s gospel,

the presenter of the King (Son of David)—if the people will not have this man to reign over them, God will give them someone else,

more to their liking, with its attendant consequences.

See Mt. 24:5. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

3,4- The Second Seal. The Second LO. The calf. The Patient Servant: The Red Horse.

The second seal and the second LO: the second LO (the calf) reminds us of the patient servant, the gospel of Mark.

Although

initially coming in peaceful conquest, the situation rapidly deteriorates, and the rider (probably the same rider as of the first horse)

is engaged in war. (See Mt: 24: 6,7a). If the people will not have God’s faithful servant to help them, and keep them in peace, they

shall have war. Christ is the Prince of Peace. (Isa 9:6). He has promised His peace to all who trust in Him: My peace I give unto you,

not as the world gives. *John 14:27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be*

troubled, neither let it be afraid.

5,6—The Third Seal and the third LO. The man. The Perfect Son of Man: The Black Horse. (cf. Lam. 5:10)

War often brings famine; men are unable to sow and plant and there is mass destruction of equipment, land, etc (e.g., scorched

earth policies) See Mt 24: 7b. A man can work for enough for himself (a penny being a day’s pay, but he will not have enough to

provide much for his family (three quarts of barley not being very nutritious). This is inflation- normally a penny would buy 8 quarts

of wheat.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

Oil and wine seem to be more the food of the wealthy—they will not be as affected. See 2 Kings 6:25-29 for the effects of famine.

25 And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver. 26 And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. 27 And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the wine-press? 28 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow. 29

So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.

7,8- The Fourth Seal. The fourth LO. The eagle. The Precious Son of God: The pale green (chloros) horse.

The rider of this horse is Death; Hades follows him. Death = the body; Hades = the soul/spirit. See Mt.24:.. *7 For nation shall rise*

against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. There is mass destruction, with war, disease and plagues, and famine, and wild animals. Cf. Ezek. 14:21. For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more

when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and

beast? 25% of earth's population dies. The scene is one of horror and death. In contrast, Christ came that men might have life. The

Son of God gave His life that men might live. (1 Jn. 5:11; John 3:16; John 6:40; Gal. 2:20) If this is rejected, then there remains only

death. Man's only options are life or death.

Matthew 24:8 calls these events 'the beginning of sorrows (birth-pangs)' *v 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows. Cf. Is.13:8; And they shall*

be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces

shall be as flames. Jer. 30:6; Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a

woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? | Thess. 5:3. It would seem that these events occur in the first 3½ years of Daniel's

70th week, before and up to the mid-point of the 7 year period. Mt. 24:9, and 24:15 point to the midpoint of the week, when the

"abomination of desolation" is set up in the temple.

The seals seem to divide into groups of four and three; the first four likely occur during the first 3 ½ years; the last 3 seals during

the latter half of the 70th week.

9-11- The Fifth Seal. Cf. Matt 24:9-28)

This seal reveals those murdered for their faith in Christ. They call for vengeance and justice, as did the OT believers. (Psalm 74, 79,

89, 94) Their souls are under the altar; they have white robes. The altar speaks of sacrifice- they have sacrificed their lives. (Cf.

Ex29:12, Lev 4:7) The white robes evoke the thought of purity and righteousness. Rest is also granted them.

12-17- The Sixth Seal. Cf. Matt 24:29-35.

My reading leads me to believe that the 6th seal takes us to the end of the 7 year period. A careful comparison of Matt.24:29,30,

with the present section, makes me believe they are describing the same events. See also Joel 2:10,11,30,31; 3:15; Isa. 34:4;

14:1:6-12. The scene is catastrophic and cataclysmic and conclusive. It sets the stage for the return of the Lord to earth.

This means that the 7 trumpets and 7 bowls (vials) are retrospective largely and occur before the 6th seal. I base this on the sequence given by the Lord in Matthew 24.

Seven classes of men from all strata of society and occupations are mentioned as calling for the rocks etc to fall on them; the great

day if the Lamb's wrath had come. The heaven, sun, moon stars, earth, mountains, and islands of the sea are all affected..

The phrase "after this" or "after these things" is therefore to be interpreted in the sequence of the visions given to John, not necessarily in

terms of the sequence of events that occur during the 70th week of Daniel.

Revelation chapter 7. The Two Groups of Believers and the Tribulation.

Revelation 6 ends with the question: "For the great day if His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Chapter 7 seems to

answer that question. It gives the picture of two groups of people, Jews first, then Gentiles, or mainly so.

The church is raptured into heaven; who will bear testimony for God upon earth now? This chapter gives us the answer.

Vv. 1-8 treat of the sealing the 144,000 of Israel, on earth, going into the tribulation. (I believe these 144,000 are seen again in ch.

14.) They are sealed before the initial unsealing of the scroll in chapter 6.

Vv. 9-17 deal with an innumerable group, out of all nations, in heaven, having come out of the tribulation, as being saved in it. The

scene is probably at the end of the tribulation, as opposed to the scene of vv.1-8 which is at or near the beginning of the tribulation.

7:1-8 ---The sealing of 144,00 of Israel.

The chapter begins with 4 angels; angels again becoming prominent in the dealings of God with men; cf. 14:18. w.r.t. fire; 14:19-

the sickle; and 16:5 w.r.t. water; and the four angels hold back the four winds of judgement, until the slaves of God have the seal of

God placed on their forehead. "Four" suggests universality. Cf. Jer. 49:36.

The timing of this seems to be the first half of the 70th week—7:3—"hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the tress..." cf. 8:7,8—the

first two trumpets, which occur in the last 3 ½ years of the 70th week.

Twelve thousand are sealed from every tribe of Israel; Dan is not mentioned, possibly b/c Dan is the source of the antichrist, cf.

Gen. 49:17. Dan also went into idolatry, see Judges 18 and Deut. 29:18-21.

"Twelve" is the number of administration. God has a sufficient and complete testimony which He will preserve throughout the 7

years.

A seal indicates ownership, preservation, and destiny. We are likewise sealed with the in-visible seal of the Holy Spirit. Eph.1:13-14.

7: 9-17—The Tribulation Murdered Ones in Heaven.

Are any saved in the tribulation? Yes, out of every nation, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues; untold numbers are saved. Are

they saved because of the witness of the 144,000? We are not told this expressly, but it seems probable. Matt 24:14; Mark 13:10.

Who else will preach the gospel of the kingdom?

The period for this seems to be the whole of the 70th week, things worsening as time goes on. Cf. Luke 21:16,24.

The Lamb is prominent in this section; 4 times mentioned. See revision on Page No.6

1) This company stands before the throne and before the Lamb.

2) They ascribe salvation to "our God... and to the Lamb".

3) They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

4) The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall shepherd them and shall lead them unto living fountains of water.

The Lamb, whose wrath was revealed to unbelievers, here has purified and is caring for His own, who were murdered for their

testimony. See Luke 21:16

Their position: they stand before the throne, and before the Lamb. They are in intimate relationship to God and the Lamb.

Their state: they are clothed in white clothing, implying **purity** and **righteousness**; they have no tears any more; they neither

hunger nor thirst any more; they do not suffer the heat of the sun any more. (Implying this had been their earthly state)

Their activity: they serve God day and night in His temple; they cry, ascribing salvation to their God and to the Lamb.

A possible order of the seals, trumpets and bowls (vials)

First 3 ½ years: seals 1-4.

Last 3 ½ years: Seal 5; Trumpets 1-5; Vials 1-5.

Prelude to Armageddon (the last battle): Trumpet 6; Vial 6

Armageddon and the Lord's Return to Earth: Seal 6; Trumpet 7; Vial 7.

Parentheses in Revelation: there are four.

Ch 7: between the 6th and 7th seal.

Ch. 10 — 11:14: between the 6th and 7th trumpet.

Ch. 12 — 14: after the 7th trumpet.

Ch. 17 - 19:11: after the 7th bowl [or vial]. 5

Use of word *shmainw semaino say-mah'-ee-no*

from *sema* (a mark, of uncertain derivation); AV-signify 6; 1) to give a sign, to signify, indicate

2) to make known

Joh 12:33 This he said, signifying <4591> what death he should die.

Joh 18:32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying <4591> what death he should die.

Joh 21:19 This spake he, signifying <4591> by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

Ac 11:28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified <4591> by the Spirit that there

should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

Ac 25:27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify <4591> the crimes laid against him.

Re 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which

*must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified <4591> it by his angel unto his servant John: 7
6*

Revised Notes Rev. 7:9-17. The Millennial Throng.

I have changed my thoughts on this portion after due reflection and consideration. I now believe that this is an earthly and millennial scene. This interpretation is not original but is shared by JND, WK, E. Dennet., FB Hole, Jim Allen, John Ritchie, and N.

Mellish, among others.

There is an innumerable multitude of those saved during the tribulation, having responded to the gospel (see Matthew 24:14; Rev. 14:6,7 etc).

There is no suggestion that they have died; rather they have endured to the end (of the tribulation) and have been saved (Matt.24:13); they "come out of the tribulation, the great one" Rev. 7:14.

They have palms in their hands, reminiscent of John 12:13, when the crowds waved palms for the Lord's entry into Jerusalem. This

is the Lord in victory. The palm also reminds us of the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles, which is celebrated again in the Millennium.

Lev23:40 (palms); Zechariah 14:16,18,19.

The throne, here mentioned 7 times, (vv. 9,10,11,11,15,16,17) is probably the earthly, millennial throne (Jer. 3:17; Zech 6:13) in

Jerusalem. Likewise, the temple is earthly, see Ezekiel 40-44.

"Day and night" v.15, are descriptive of earthly conditions.

The heavenly temple is associated with God's judgment. Rev 11:19; 14:15,17; 15: 5,6,6,8; 16:1,7.

There are several references to Isaiah, which is a millennial book.

Rev 7:15- He that sits on the throne shall tabernacle over them. (literal) cf. Isa. 4:5,6.

Rev 7:17- all tears wiped away. Cf. Isa.25:8. This also applies in the eternal state, as do many millennial conditions, sin and rebellion, disease and death, excepted.

Rev. 7:16—no more hunger or thirst etc; Isa. 49:10. Cf. the judgment of Rev 16:8. The believers would have suffered through that.

Rev. 12:12—fountains of water of life—Isa. 12:12.

Based on all these considerations, the above scene becomes more obviously earthly than heavenly.

August 2012